

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH ELECTION - LATEST FIGURES, SOME CONFUSION

SUMMARY: LATEST FIGURES, THOUGH NOT OFFICIAL AND FINAL INDICATE THAT SWEDEN'S ELECTION HAS TURNED OUT AS STALE-MATE. EVERYONE NOW BUSILY TRYING FIGURE OUT UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION. COALITION BEGINNING APPEAR UNLIKELY. BEST BET IS PALME WILL HANG ON.

WITH POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS

IN SPRING NEXT YEAR. NEW RIKSDAG CONVENING JAN 1974 WILL HAVE MANY PRACTICAL PROBLEMS FROM VERY BEGINNING SUCH AS CHOOSING COMMITTEES. END SUMMARY.

1. ALTHOUGH MINOR COUNTING PROBLEMS PERSIST, ALL BALLOTS INCLUDING MAIL BALLOTS ARE NOW IN. IT APPEARS CERTAIN THAT SWEDISH ELECTION HAS ENDED IN A DRAW. LATEST UNOFFICIAL TALLY (FUGURES IN PARENTHESES 1970 ELECTION RESULTS):

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P/C

RIKSDAG SEATS

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS	43.58 (45.3)	156 (163)
COMMUNISTS (VPK)	5.32 (4.8)	19 (17)
CENTER	25.04 (19.9)	90 (71)
MODERATE	14.29 (11.5)	51 (41)
LIBERAL	9.41 (16.2)	34 (58)

2. THREE OPPOSITION BURGEOIS PARTIES NOW HAVE 48.79P/C
OPPOSED TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND COMMUNISTS WITH 48.90 P/C
RIKSDAG MANDATES ARE DIVIDED 175 - 175. OFFICIAL
RECOUNT IS NOW IN PROCESS AND GOVERNMENT HOPES TO
ANNOUNCE FINAL OFFICIAL FIGURES SEPT. 21.

3. LIBERAL LEADER HELEN AND NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS HAVE
DEMANDED PALME GOVERNMENT RESIGN, BUT IT APPEARS PALME
WILL STAY ON FOR TIME BEING. CENTER PARTY SPOKESMAN
DECLINED YESTERDAY TO SUPPORT HELEN'S DEMAND THAT PALME
RESIGN. CENTER LEADER FALLDIN HAS NOT DECLARED HIS
INTENTIONS YET. SOME OPPOSITION QUARTERS HAVE DISCOVERED
A "PRECEDENT" THAT GOVERNMENTS RESIGN AT A CHANGE IN
MONARCHY, BUT THIS IS DISPUTED AND WE BELIEVE PALME WILL
IGNORE IT.

4. PARTY LEADERS, CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERTS, POLITICAL
SCIENTISTS AND JOURNALISTS ARE BUSILY TRYING TO FIGURE
OUT WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION
OF AN EVENLY-DIVIDED RIKSDAG WHERE MAJOR ISSUES MIGHT
HAVE TO DEPEND ON THE CHANCE OF A DRAW. CENTER PARTY
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MET TODAY TO TAKE STOCK OF SITUATION.
FALLDIN HAS ALREADY RULED OUT POSSIBILITY OF CENTER-SOCIAL
DEMOCRAT COALITION, NOTING THERE IS NOT POLITICAL BASE
FOR SUCH COOPERATION. HELEN HAS TAKEN SIMILAR STAND,
THOUGH SOME YOUNGER LIBERALS ARE PUBLICLY ADVOCATING
EXAMINATION OF COALITION IDEA. ON OTHER SIDE, IT APPEARS
PALME IS NOT NOW IN POSITION TO OFFER COALITION TO
LIBERALS, SINCE POWERFUL LABOR FEDERATION CHIEF GUNNAR
NILSSON FLATLY AND PUBLICLY OPPOSED TO IT (SEE SEPTEL).
ALTHOUGH NO ONE EXCEPT PARTIES ON TWO WINGS HAVE RULED
OUT SOCDEM-CENTER-LIBERAL "GRAND COALITION," THERE APPEARS
LITTLE BASIS NOW FOR SUCH A COALITION.

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5. WITH COALITION NOW RECEDING AS A POSSIBILITY IT
BECOMES LIKELY THAT SOCDEMS WILL TRY TO CONTINUE IN
GOVERNMENT AS LONG AS THEY CAN AND CAREFULLY CHOOSE TIME
FOR AN ELECTION. SWEDISH CONSTITUTION PROVIDES THAT A
NEW RIKSDAG CANNOT BE DISOLVED FOR 90 DAYS, HENCE A
NEW ELECTION IS RULED OUT UNTIL LATE SPRING, 1974.
SOCDEMS ARE PERIODICALLY DEPENDENT ON COMMUNIST SUPPORT,
NEVERTHELESS, JUST TO KEEP DAY TO DAY BUSINESS GOING IN

RISDAG. TOO MUCH OPEN COOPERATION WITH AND DEPENDENCE UPON COMMUNISTS WOULD DIM CHANCES OF SOCDEMS IN ANY FUTURE ELECTION.

6. PALME WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE GOVERNING DURING THE LAME-DUCK RIKSDAG SESSION, OCTOBER -DECEMBER, BUT THE PARACTICLA PROBLEMS WILL ARISE EVEN BEFORE NEW RIKSDAG CONVENES IN JANUARY. ONE OF THE FIRST PIECES OF BUSINESS OF NEW RIKSDAG WILL BE TO ELECT SPEAKER AND 16 STANDING COMMITTEES (SWEDEN'S RIKSDAG USES A COMMITTEE SYSTEM TO PREPARE LEGISLATION AND THESE COMMITTEES ARE VERY POWERFUL, SOMEWHAT ON AMERICAN LINE). IF THE TWO BLOCS HOLD TOGETHER, THEN A SERIES OF TIE VOTES WOULD ENSUE. THE ONLY WAY TO BREAK A TIE IS BY DRAWING LOTS. IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE GOVERNMENT PLAYING ROULETTE WITH CHAIRMANSHIPS OF KEY COMMITTEES. THUS, PALME WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE TO COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS IN DECEMBER AIMED AT REACHING COMPROMISE DEALS. COMPLICATING HIS PROBLEM IS THE NEW TRUCULENCE OF STRENGTHENED COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH IS NOW DEMANDING SEATS ON ALL 16 COMMITTEES, INCLUDING DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THEY SIT ON ONLY 11 COMMITTEES IN THIS RIKSDAG, NONE OF THEM MAJOR. BOURGEOIS PARTIES CAN BE EXPECTED TO RESIST BITTERLY COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION ON IMPORTANT COMMITTEES. THUS, PALME CANNOT RULE OUT PROSPECT THAT RIKSDAG COULD BECOME STALEMATED ON ITS VERY FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS AND BE FORCED TO TURN TO LOTTERY. A NEWSPAPER CARTOONIST SUMMED IT UP TODAY BY PICTURING A LEGISLATOR BEGINNING HIS RIKSDAG SPEECH WITH THE TRADITIONAL "MR. SPEAKER" -- FOLLOWED BY, "DEAR LOTTERY."

COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT PALME HOPES TO GET THROUGH THE AUTUMN IN REASONABLE SHAPE AND TO HORSE-TRADE SHREWDLY ENOUGH TO HAVE AT LEAST MINIMAL CONTROL OF NEW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RIKSDAG. BUT HIS PRESTIGE HAS BEEN HURT, AND HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT CONCLUSIONS SOCDEM SATRAPS WILL ULTIMATELY DRAW FROM DISAPPOINTING ELECTION. THUS, NEXT SIX MONTHS ARE CRITICAL FOR PALME, AND HE IS NO SURE THING TO SURVIVE EVEN THOUGH RIKSDAG OPPOSITION CANNOT BRING HIM DOWN BY ITSELF.

OLSEN

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